

Mary Seacole Day Nursery & Family Support Unit

Mapp Community Centre, 22 Mount Pleasant, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 2TD

Inspection date	09/12/2014
Previous inspection date	11/08/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	1
	Previous inspection:	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		1
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		1

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is outstanding

- Staff provide excellent support for families, and their keen focus on nurturing children's personal, social, and emotional development underpins progress in all other areas of their learning and development.
- Staff plan and provide children with a wonderful, rich and purposeful learning environment, which sparks children's interest and enthusiasm for learning.
- Children's individual needs are quickly identified and exceptionally well met through highly effective partnership working.
- Staff treat children with a great deal of respect and this results in a harmonious, caring environment for everyone, where every child is valued and every family welcomed.
- The manager has high standards and encourages her team to evaluate and reflect on their practice across all areas of the nursery. Together they drive forward improvements which directly benefit outcomes for all children.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed a wide range of activities across all areas of the nursery, and talked with staff and children about what they were doing.
The inspector reviewed documents and procedures relating to safeguarding, staffing, supervision, risk assessment, equal opportunities and health and safety, and checked a selection of other policies.
- The inspector sampled a range of children's records, the nursery's systems for planning, evaluation and exchanging information with parents and external professionals.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day and reviewed written communication from parents.
- The inspector met with, and conducted, a joint observation with the manager.

Inspector

Helen Robinshaw

Full report

Information about the setting

Mary Seacole Day Nursery and Family Support Unit first registered in 1991 and has been registered in the current premises since 2006. It is a registered charity which works in partnership with two other projects, PHAB and APPOLLO. The nursery and the other projects are housed in the same community centre. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. There are currently 51 children on roll in the early years age range. The nursery is open each week day from 8am to 5.45pm for 51 weeks a year. Children may attend for a variety of sessions or for the whole day. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are learning English as an additional language. It is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three, and four.

The nursery currently employs 16 staff. There are 10 core members of staff who work with the children on a daily basis. The manager holds relevant qualifications at level 6 and Qualified Teacher Status. Nine other members of staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The nursery also employs a cook, a bookkeeper and four apprentices. The nursery currently supports four students working towards level 2 qualifications.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- enhance pre-school children's confidence in using technology.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Children make excellent progress in their learning and development at this vibrant and nurturing family focused day nursery. All staff work closely with parents to understand their hopes and concerns as their children settle into the nursery. Together, staff and parents establish children's current strengths and achievements, learn about their individual needs, and identify areas for further observation or support. These early sessions provide parents with a practical knowledge of how staff care for and teach their children, and how they may work in partnership with staff. Staff provide parents with a wealth of information they can scan or study along the central corridor of the centre. Parents match photographs of staff with their names and qualifications. They understand the role of the key person, and quickly get to know the team who work with their children. Bright displays of children activities link theory and practice, and show parents how staff foster all areas of their children's learning through play. Other display boards engage parents in decision making across the nursery. Staff summarise the choices the nursery

needs to make, and asks parents for their opinions on the best way forward. Staff are highly accountable to parents in all aspect of their work. Parents say staff make them feel valued and supported from the start. They say they are comfortable to ask any questions, share any concerns, and work with staff to help their children. Highly successful strategies engage all parents in their children's activities from the beginning and provide the basis for good rates of progress in children's learning thereafter.

Senior staff have very high expectations for themselves, and have steadily learnt how to raise standards across all aspects of the nursery in the years they have worked together. They are also highly supportive of junior staff and open to the challenges of new ideas and teaching strategies. As a result, children's activities across the nursery are exciting, varied, and enriching. Babies constantly use their senses to explore the world around them as staff introduce them to music and songs, and different types of sensory play. Staff carefully observe their skills in handling toys as they move from one exciting activity to another around their well-organised baby room. They plan and provide activities, which build on babies existing skills, and give them more opportunities to practise skills those have not yet mastered. A keen focus on babies' social skills, communication and physical development by the baby team provides the youngest children with very firm foundations for all future learning.

Staff encourage toddlers to choose and investigate the activities that catch their attention and imaginations. They arrange a wealth of resources so that toddlers can see them, use them, and eventually tidy them away. For example, during the inspection, toddlers choose to immerse themselves in a book or two, while their friends persist with jigsaws and constructions. Additionally, the home corner is busy with children making up games and cooking food. Staff encourage children to talk about what they are doing, to share their thoughts and plans for their game. Staff take time to find out about the children's interests so they are in a better position to challenge their thinking, and teach new words and ideas. Children hear new vocabulary that helps them to explain themselves more clearly. They practise new words and ideas on other children as they tell them what they are doing, and why it matters. Children are well-motivated, keen to experiment, and are happy in their play and learning.

The nursery is in the heart of the city and attracts many children for whom English is an additional language. Where there are gaps or delays in children's learning, staff quickly provide additional help so children become confident, successful communicators in time for school entry. For example, staff provide and use books in different languages. They display and learn key words in home languages to help children settle in to routines and express their needs. Senior staff work closely with local health visitors, social services, and the women's refuge. They provide high levels of support and nurturing to many families in challenging circumstances. Given many of their starting points, children make very good levels of progress during their time at the nursery and family support unit. This is due to the quality, commitment, and experience of the core teaching team, and the high number of enthusiastic students and apprentices working alongside them.

Staff are also highly skilled in identifying and working with children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They record a range of detailed observations of children's progress and evaluate the impact of their teaching on closing gaps in children's

learning. Staff share this evidence with parents and professionals who provide additional support for children. Where possible funding identified in children's statements of special educational needs and/or disabilities is sought. However, whether funding is available or not, the manager ensures staffing levels across the nursery are high, and conscientious staff offer flexible working hours, so the team can meet children's individual needs appropriately. All staff place a high priority on early identification and support to meet children's individual needs. They are highly effective in helping all children make the best possible progress towards the early learning goals, in readiness for school entry.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Staff show great sensitivity and understanding when settling new children and their families into the nursery. This is a community nursery and family support unit. Senior staff have extensive experience of supporting families with young children, from a wide range of backgrounds and cultures. Staff welcome parents to visit for as many sessions as they wish before their child starts at the nursery. Parents who do not understand the English education system, the language, or nursery routines greatly appreciate these opportunities to see and participate. Staff nurture children through their first weeks at nursery so they feel secure and confident to explore new activities. Each child has a key person who takes responsibility for preparing progress reports to share with parents. The key person also works well with other staff and local placements to ensure children move easily into different teaching groups, as they grow older.

A strong focus on developing children's personal, social, and emotional skills is evident across the nursery. Experienced staff use every day events to teach respect and care for each other. Children soon learn that they are part of a group and this involves taking turns, and sharing adult attention. Children are confident that staff will meet their individual needs, so they are more willing to wait a few moments for their turn. Staff rehearse rhymes and stories with children so they know them well. This increases children's self-confidence as they can predict what will happen next and join in with familiar phrases. Staff use many different ways to tell a familiar story which helps to sustain children's interest. For example, they use props and puppets, story maps, craft activities, and role-play to act out stories together. Younger children listen and attend as they watch children act out stories in their playroom. Older children gain confidence while they practise plays and learn to speak in front of an audience of parents. Staff also welcome parents in to visit and share their knowledge and expertise. Parents share songs and recipes from different cultures, and help by drawing large pictures for children to paint and collage. This is a highly stimulating nursery where children thrive as they experience so many new opportunities in life.

Staff take the children on regular outings into the community to pursue children's interests at the library. They learn about different festivals, visit places of worship, and join other members out in the community as they celebrate Christmas pantomimes and parties. Staff also use these outings to teach children how to keep themselves safe and healthy. Children learn about road safety and keeping together as they walk into the town centre. They visit market stalls and learn about different fruits and vegetables. Staff draw

children's attention as the emergency services rush past. Children stop to think about how other people in their community help them. Children develop a strong sense of their place in their community and the diversity of 'city' life. Some staff lack confidence in using the smart board technology, which they cover with children's artwork. Whereas in the past, the older children have displayed photographs of their outings, artwork, and memories on the screen and used it to practice pre-literacy skills.

Children also gain plenty of fresh air and exercise as they play and investigate in their exciting outdoor garden. Staff are quick to apply for grants to provide the resources to challenge children's physical development and imaginations. Children learn to climb steps, run up and along bridges, and slide back down again. They bounce balls into low basketball nets and aim beanbags at numbered targets. Staff help children learn to balance on different types of equipment and pedal others. With encouragement from staff, children practise counting as they hop along a number ladder. They imagine the adventures they may have when they cross a bridge, and search the construction shed for useful props. Younger children experiment with sizes and capacity in their mud kitchen. Their friends choose different tools to chalk or paint on large chalkboards and clear plastic screens.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

The manager and her senior team have an excellent understanding of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Together they ensure that all staff diligently implement policies and daily procedures concerned with all aspects of safety and welfare across the nursery. Procedures for recruitment, induction, and training of staff, students, and volunteers are exemplary, and well documented. Staff training in safeguarding receives a high priority and staff are very clear and confident about how to address concerns. Senior staff work closely with colleagues from other agencies through child protection cases and 'team around the child' meetings. The manager is meticulous in her record keeping and knowledge of all the children in her care. Weekly staff meetings include updates on children's progress and provide staff with regular opportunities to follow through any concerns. These measures help to ensure children's safety within the nursery, and contribute to a coordinated approach to meet their care and welfare needs across the community.

The nursery team work closely with a local college, and have considerable experience in nurturing and training young people entering the profession. Senior staff enjoy the vibrant enthusiasm and fresh ideas of trainees who are keen to follow their high standards of care and education. The manager, who is highly qualified, keeps up with research in early years education and welcomes new challenges. She works hard to coach, support, and supervise new members of the team, and encourages many to pursue higher levels of training. On occasion, where staff or trainees have proved unsuitable, or less willing to follow guidance, the manager has worked effectively to replace them. Her leadership, performance management, and regular supervisions ensure that her staff remain suitable to work with children and fulfil their responsibilities within the team.

The drive to improve achievements for all children is evident in the dedication of the manager and her core team of staff. Together they, and the parent committee, have developed this nursery from a primitive to an inspiring, high quality nursery for a diverse and often vulnerable range of families. Staff carry out all the mandatory procedures for the safe management of the nursery. Staff also meet all the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children's individual needs are exceptionally well met by a team combining wisdom, experience, and enthusiasm. Staff are highly committed to raising standards in the education and care of all the children who attend the nursery. The manager ensures staff have numerous opportunities to reflect upon, evaluate, and develop their professional skills. Staff quickly identify children's needs and support them through excellent partnership working with parents and professionals. Consequently, children make very good progress given their starting points and are ready for their moves to school and other activities in their community.

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected again within six months of the date of this inspection.
Met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY297552
Local authority	Reading
Inspection number	833956
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	38
Number of children on roll	51
Name of provider	Mary Seacole Day Nursery & Family Support Unit Committee
Date of previous inspection	11/08/2009
Telephone number	01189 168418

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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